

**Submission to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights  
by Dr. Jane Dobson on Bill C-7**

I am writing to you as a family doctor who is working in long term care. I am very concerned about Bill C-7 which endangers the lives of vulnerable Canadians. It expands “medical assistance in dying” to virtually everyone who is sick or suffering and wishes to end their lives. It removes vital safeguards.

My disabled patients already feel disempowered and looked down upon by our society. This bill is making the statement that indeed their lives are not worth living or saving. If one of my disabled patients becomes suicidal they will automatically qualify for MAiD. No efforts at treating their suicidal thoughts or depression are deemed necessary.

I can think of a number of my patients who became depressed and suicidal during their lives. With help and good medical care their depression lifted along with their suicidal thoughts. Now however those who have chronic illness or disability and are not in the process of dying, will qualify for MAiD and be killed. What a waste of their beautiful lives. My patients were so happy that they were helped through their down times. They are thankful that they are now alive.

People who are to be killed by MAiD deserve the opportunity to change their mind on their day of death. They deserve this vital safeguard. My own mother said that if she became demented I should “just shoot her”. However when she did become cognitively impaired she was thankful for her life and had no memory of her previous wishes. It would have been cruel and immoral to kill her when she would have had no understanding of what was happening and no ability to consent on the day of her death.

As the bill now stands with so many safeguards having been thrown out, my patient who asks for MAiD may be killed the very same day. No time for reflection. No time to reassess how her needs may be met by other means. No offers of help, just the lethal injection.

Please make changes to this bill. Please stand with the vulnerable. Please retain the original safeguards. Please promote suicide prevention, not suicide assistance for the disabled and chronically ill. Please work for more and better services to improve their lives, not a service which kills them.

Specifically I am asking for the following amendments to Bill C-7:

- 1) Bring back the original requirement for a “reasonably foreseeable death”.
- 2) Bring back the original requirement that a person must give consent to MAiD immediately before it is performed.
- 3) Bring back the original requirement for two witnesses, both of whom cannot be providing personal care to the applicant.
- 4) Bring back the 10 day reflection period for people whose deaths have been deemed “reasonably foreseeable.”
- 5) Make it a requirement that health care professionals do everything possible to help their patients access life enhancing services to relieve their suffering other than MAiD.
- 6) Make sure that people with communication deficits are given adequate help to demonstrate their wishes, so that MAiD is not administered against their will.

Please contact me if I can be of any further help to you.

Thank you for your attention in this matter of vital importance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Jane Dobson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Jane Dobson MD, CCFP

14 November 2020